Amendments to the Claims:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (currently amended) A process for modifying an unmodified clay, said process consisting of the step of ~~comprising the steps of~~

intimately mixing a montmorillonite type clay with an organomodifier selected from quaternary ammonium salts, sulphonium salts, phosphonium salts, siliconated ammonium compounds, highly fluorinated ammonium compounds, precursors of said salts and mixtures of at least two of said compounds, said mixing being done in a presence of carbon dioxide (CO_2) under pressure,

wherein polar solvents including water and alcohols are absent~~water is absent~~.

Claim 2. (previously presented) The process according to claim 1, wherein the CO_2 is in a supercritical state.

Claim 3. (cancelled)

Claim 4. (previously presented) The process according to claim 1, wherein the quaternary ammonium salt employed is an alkylammonium salt.

Claim 5. (previously presented) The process according to claim 4, wherein the alkylammonium salt is selected from the group comprising tetraethylammonium chloride, tetrabutylammonium hydrogen sulphate, didodecyldimethylammonium bromide and mixtures thereof.

Claim 6. (previously presented) The process according to claim 1, wherein the siliconated ammonium compound used is a modified poly(dimethylsiloxane).

Claim 7. (previously presented) The process according to claim 1, wherein the highly fluorinated ammonium compound used is tetrahydroperfluorooctyltriethylammonium iodide.

Claim 8. (previously presented) The process according to claim 1, wherein the quaternary ammonium compound precursors are an amine and an alkyl halide.

Claim 9. (previously presented) The process according to claim 1, wherein the CO_2 is at a pressure of 50 to 300 bars and at a temperature of 40°C to 50 °C.

Claim 10. (previously presented) A biodegradable polyester foam prepared in the presence of an organomodified clay using the process according to claim 1, having a homogeneous, substantially regular, fine and closed cellular structure.

Claim 11. (cancelled)